



# THE

MONTHLY



# GULL

BULLETIN

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NUMBER 9

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** The next regular meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held on Thursday evening the 13th inst., at 8 o'clock in the Board Room of the Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Bldg., Second Floor, Room 19.

The evening will be given over mainly to a symposium of summer observations (during vacations). A report will be made on the State Bird Campaign by the Committee thereon, and the membership will be asked to express ideas on the policy to be pursued in the near future.

It is even probable that a visitor from Australia may arrive in time to give us a few Nature Notes on that Continent.

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**SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP** will be taken on Sunday, September 16th, to Baumberg Station, on the Alvarado branch, a short distance below Mt. Eden, for the purpose of observing waders, shore birds and the earlier ducks. The lists on the trip run from thirty to thirty-five interesting species, with possibilities of including avocets and stilts.

Take Southern Pacific ferry leaving San Francisco at 7:40 a. m. East Bay members may take train at First Street and Broadway, Oakland, at 8:15 a. m. Purchase round trip ticket to Baumberg, 90c from San Francisco, about 75c from Oakland. Allow ample time to purchase tickets before boarding train. Return train will leave Mt. Eden at 4:23 p. m. Bring lunch and canteens.

The party will leave clubhouse at Baumberg, about one-quarter mile west of the station, at 9 a. m. The meeting place (clubhouse) may be reached by automobile via the highway from San Lorenzo to Mt. Eden and Alvarado, turning off toward the bay about three-quarters of a mile below Mt. Eden Four Corners. As end of trip is made at Mt. Eden, automobilists are urged to reach Mt. Eden in time to park their cars there and board train for Baumberg at 8:52 a. m. A permit being required to enter upon the property, all members are requested to meet and to remain together.

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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUGUST MEETING:** The one hundred and thirty-seventh meeting of this Association was held on the 9th of August in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Bldg., Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn, President, in the chair; Mrs. Carl Smith officiating as Secretary.

Only little routine business was there to transact.

The lecture, on Gulls, was delivered by Mr. Joseph Mailliard, who illustrated the same with his own lantern slides and with specimens loaned by the California Academy of Sciences. The lecturer gave an extensive account of the distinguishable differences between the species along our coast and their respective life habits.



Mr. Mailliard arranged the comparative table of distinguishable field marks that appears in this issue and that will be valuable for handy reference.



### SOME RANDOM NOTES ON SEA BIRDS ALONG THE CALIFORNIA COAST

The following observations were made between May 25 and June 10, 1928, while I was engaged in making a survey of the marine mammals of the State:

Cormorants and Pelicans. I observed two species of cormorants: the Farallon and the Brandt. The Brandt was the most numerous. They were in varying numbers on every rock of any size along the entire California coast. I saw the Farallon only in one place, a large bird rookery on Castle Rock off Crescent City. It was always possible a long way off to tell whether cormorants were the predominating birds on a rock, as the cormorants and pelicans always paint the rock a dazzling white with their guano. The other birds do not do this to any extent. I saw no White Pelicans, only the California Brown Pelican, which occurs along the entire coast. A curious incident occurred while crossing Monterey Bay. It was calm and foggy. A pelican and a cormorant came into view, the pelican leading, and the cormorant followed the leader in the same manner as another pelican would have done. When the pelican flapped the cormorant flapped, and when the pelican "coasted" the cormorant "coasted." They proceeded in this fashion as long as they were in sight. Cormorants are among the most abundant species which nest in California waters. On practically every bird rookery they were represented in large proportional numbers and a good many of the bare rocks supported large numbers of them, to the exclusion of any other bird. Both the pelican and cormorant rookeries were evident to the sense of smell. Their nests seem to be used year after year, and a rock on which they have bred unmolested for any length of time appears to be pitted with little cup-shaped craters of guano lined with sea weed or grass. At one place I saw cormorants bringing hay from a hayfield on the mainland out to a rock half a mile offshore. On Gull Rocks, at the west end of Santa Cruz Island, there is a deserted lobster fisherman's shack. The cormorants here have nested on the porch; there were several nests inside on the floor and in what had been the cupboard there were three nests one above the other on shelves. The young cormorants are repulsive looking objects, appearing at first like dirty black leather. On all of the rookeries I found them from birds just scrambling from the egg to fledglings which must have been several weeks old.

Gulls. Next to the cormorants, the Western Gull was the most numerous bird. Their nesting sites were much more "tidy," however, and they do not crowd together as do most of the other species. They choose an earth covered slope, preferably with some grass, as a place to nest, and the nests are generally about three feet or more apart. It is a pretty sight to sail by, close to a bird rookery, and see the shining white breasts of the brooding birds spaced regularly across a grass covered slope. The young gulls are pretty little bits of soft down. They do not struggle and make raucous noises when handled, as do most of the other young birds, but will nestle down on the palm of your hand, look you steadily in the eye and "sit tight" until you are ready to put them down. The browns and grays of the young gulls blend well with the nesting sites selected by the adults, and this, together with the young gulls' habit of "freezing" on the approach of danger, necessitates watchfulness to avoid stepping on the chicks.

The Murres are interesting little birds which are, perhaps, better known in California than any other sea bird. There are, however, two habits of the murre, both rather ludicrous, which I have not seen recorded. On several occasions when on fishing boats I have nearly run down a murre with her



chicks, when the mother would dive, but the chick, being still too young to have learned the art of diving, would merely thrust its head under the water and frantically paddle the headless body along, evidently with the impression that it was under water. After the chicks are a little older they dive as well as the adults. On one occasion the mother bird dived on the approach of the boat, but the chick stuck it out a little longer before going under. When the old bird returned to the surface the chick was gone, and after looking all about she emitted a raucous squawk which could have been heard a mile. When the chick reappeared the old bird was frantically solicitous and evidently relieved.

The Tufted Puffins are not very numerous. I saw them at different places on the entire coast, but nowhere in great numbers. The largest group I observed was on Castle Rock, offshore from Crescent City.

Kaeding's Petrel, being semi-nocturnal, is not often observed. I found these petrels on Castle Rock, their shallow burrows mixed in among the puffins. I dug one out to examine the form of the burrow and caught the owner. It seemed dazed in the bright light of the sun and, when I released it, flew rather erratically for some distance, after which it straightened out its flight and flew swiftly until it disappeared over a rise.

The Black Oystercatcher is not very plentiful, as a general rule only one pair being found on any one rookery. However, the pair make up for the deficiency in numbers as they are cocky, noisy birds, following the investigator about and alarming the whole rookery with their clatter. If a stone is thrown at them they change their position and increase the noise. I found one of their nests or burrows on Gull Rocks. It was a shallow natural hole in the northern face of a rock cliff, and was damp and cold from percolating water. There were two downy birds, mouse colored and with disproportionately large round bodies. They crowded toward the back of their hole when I looked in, and ejected excreta at me.

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PAUL BONNET.

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP

During the first ten years of the existence of this Association, it had escaped the attention of its members that the Constitution had a provision for life membership. An apparently casual inquiry on the subject was made by Mr. Ralph Ellis Jr., of Berkeley, and through this the subject was brought to life. Soon several applications were in for Life Membership, but the original inquirer being the first applicant, he was deservedly accorded the prestige of being the first life member of the Audubon Association.

Within less than one year thereafter there have been twelve life memberships issued. There is no better way of testifying to one's loyalty to the Association and devotion to the principle to which it is dedicated—fundamentally the love of birds—than to enroll for life as member of this Association. Here follow the names of the Association's first twelve life members:

Mr. Ralph Ellis Jr.	Mrs. Isabel Logie	Mrs. Edward Hohfeld
Mr. Carlos B. Lastreto	Mr. R. D. McElroy	Mr. Henry Trost
Mrs. Inez Mexia	Hon. Jas. D. Phelan	Mr. Joseph Mailliard
Mr. Carl R. Smith	Mrs. E. C. Pitcher	Mr. Thomas W. Johnson

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### BOOKS

Cowbirds, by Herbert Friedmann, is the name of an extensive work of high merit being published (by Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois), illustrated from field photographs and with maps: price \$6. A discount of 10% on orders from members of this Association.

Members are reminded that Hoffmann's Birds of the Pacific States, \$5, is obtainable at 10% special discount to them.

# IDENTIFICATION MARKS OF AD

Arranged for *The G*

TAIL

Name and Length in Inches	Mantle	Primaries
Glaucous-winged 23.7 - 27.7	Light pearl gray	Light gray, tipped with white
Western 24.0 - 27.0	Deep pearl gray to plumbeous	Black, with white tips, mirror on outer primary; gray wedge on all except outer
Herring 22.5 - 26.0	Pale neutral gray	Black, white-tipped, 10th and often 9th mirrored, large gray wedge; less blk. showing from below.
California 20.0 - 23.0	Clear neutral gray, lighter than Western Gull	Black, white tips and usually large mirrors on 2 outer primaries; all with gray wedge
Ring-billed 18.0 - 20.0	Pale neutral gray	Black, little or no white tipping but mirror on 10th and sometimes 9th; often large gray wedge
Short-billed 16.5 - 18.0 Bill weak	Pale pearl gray	Black, with but little white tipping on 10th and 9th, with large mirror
Bonaparte's 12.0 - 14.0	Light neutral gray. (Head mostly white in winter, black in spring)	Black on terminal portion; extensive white wedge; 10th and 9th without white tip

TAIL BLACK

Heerman's 17.5 - 21.0	Deep mouse gray. (Body gray beneath. Head white in summer)	Black, white spots at tips
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Mantle is the back from neck to rump, including upper surfaces of  
Primaries are the large, stiff feathers of the wings.

Wedge, or Tongue, is a lighter or differently colored portion of the i

Mirror is a name for a subterminal white spot on a primary, as sho  
tip and the point of the wedge.

Culmen is the upper line or ridge of the bill, from end of feathering

Length of Wing is taken from bend of outermost joint to end of lo



# GULLS OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY

JOSEPH MAILLIARD

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Bill	Legs and Feet	Wing (Inches)	Culmen (Inches)
red spot at of lower ble.	Flesh colored	16.0 - 17.2	2.0 - 2.6
yellow to yellow; or- spot at angle.	Creamy flesh	14.8 - 16.5	1.9 - 2.3
to olive yel- vermillion at angle.	Flesh to olive yellow	14.6 - 17.2	1.8 - 2.3
to chrome or yellow; red and some at angle.	Gray-green to yellow	15.0 - 16.7	1.7 - 2.2
ash yellow to chrome.	Greenish to chrome yellow	13.6 - 15.6	1.5 - 1.8
ash yellow to yellow	Gray-greenish to straw yellow	12.8 - 14.2	1.2 - 1.5
	Orange vermillion	9.7 - 10.7	1.2 - 1.6

WHITE TIP

banded near th black; ex- tip whitish owish.	Deep brown to olive slate	12.8 - 14.5	1.4 - 1.8
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web of a feather, extending outwardly from the feather's base.  
in some species of gulls, separated by a dark space from both the

erehead to tip of bill.  
primary.

## THE GULL

The Corresponding Secretary has a few copies of Cooper Ornithological Club's Avifauna, No. 18, Directory of Bird-Life of the San Francisco Bay Region (Grinnell and Wythe) at \$2 per copy. (Regular price \$4.)

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**AUGUST FIELD TRIP**, led by Mrs. A. S. Kibbe, was from Mill Valley over the short cut trail to Muir Woods, down Frank Valley to Big Lagoon and the beach, returning to Almonte by way of Green Gulch and Coyote Creek.

On the trail west of the Belvedere reservoir, a pair of band-tailed pigeons circled about a couple of times and during our descent to Muir Woods two more singles were sighted. We also were favored by a western gnatcatcher that moved down our trail so that all had many good views of it.

Muir Woods augments the list with warbling vireos and a lutescent warbler. About a mile below the woods two more western gnatcatchers were found and near them two broods of northern pine siskins.

At the beach two Heerman gulls outstaid our party. Many cormorants were seen skimming the waves and many gulls soared above us.

The party was grieved to find the following dead birds on the beach: one great blue heron, three California murres, three northern phalaropes, one each of the following: slender-billed sheerwater, Baird cormorant, pigeon guillemot, ancient murrelet, domestic pigeon, all of which evidences shooting practice in that locality.

Many Brewer- and red-wing blackbirds were in the pasture east of the lagoon. The quail broods encountered were large, some nearly grown. Near the head of Green Gulch the white-crowned sparrows were very numerous. On the bay opposite Almonte were two small flocks of northern phalaropes and along the marshes were great flocks of California and western gulls. Only one murre was seen on the bay.

Considering the time of year when so many songs are hushed until another spring, and that a high wind most of day, made bird notes less audible and birding consequently more difficult, the leader and party felt the following list an ample reward for the strenuous walk we took for it.

Birds encountered were cormorants, great blue heron, American bittern, turkey vulture, western red-tailed hawk, California quail, northern phalarope, California, western and Heerman gulls, California murres, band-tailed pigeon, Anna and Allen hummers, western belted kingfisher, red shafted flicker, western flycatcher, cliff and barn swallows, stellar and California jays, western crow, chickadee, bush-tit, wren-tit, western robin, western blue bird, western gnatcatcher, western warbling vireo, lutescent warbler, red-wing blackbird, western meadow lark, Brewer blackbird, black-headed grosbeak, linnet, willow and green-backed goldfinches, pine siskins, brown towhee, Savannah, Nuttall and song sparrows, forty-one species.

Those in attendance were: Members, Mrs. Kibbe, Misses Cohen, Martha Crum, Mott; Messrs. Lockerbie and Myer and guests; Scouts: Ted Marshall, Joe Mendelson, Mark Anthony and Weldon Hillhouse. Six members and four guests.

C. W. LOCKERBIE, Historian.

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## AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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Meets second Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the State

Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Building, Second Floor, Room 19.

Address Bulletin correspondence to the Corresponding Secretary.

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